1.0 Location: Seneca Valley High School,19401 Crystal Rock Drive, Germantown, Maryland

2.0 Meeting Purpose: To engage and educate the public about the County's goals for watershed restoration and protection and to review current watershed conditions in the Great Seneca, Lower Monocacy, Muddy Branch, and Watts Branch watersheds.

3.0 Participants: Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (MCDEP) sponsored the meeting with technical presentations from MCDEP and Biohabitats, Inc. and Capuco Consulting Services, Inc. Biohabitats, Inc. is the lead firm of the consultant team working on strategy development. The meeting was facilitated by Resolve. The audience included concerned citizens, members from watershed organizations and other non-governmental organizations, as well as staff from MCDEP, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Montgomery Soil Conservation District, and Councilmember Knapp's office.

4.0 Welcome and Introductions: The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:15 a.m. with a welcoming from Juliana Birkhoff of Resolve who introduced the MCDEP and consultant staff present at the meeting. She presented the meeting agenda and reviewed the purpose for the meeting. The agenda called for technical presentations from MCDEP, Biohabitats, and Capuco Consulting followed by breakout sessions to examine four of the County's watersheds. The meeting would then be concluded with an additional question and answer period.

5.0 Overview of Montgomery County Stormwater Programs and Review Activities for New Permit: Meo Curtis of MCDEP began with an introductory slideshow explaining the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit, the need for restoration and stormwater management in the County, and details behind the MS4 permit requirements. She highlighted how Montgomery County meets water resource goals and stormwater programs. She also introduced the new and enhanced requirements in the MS4 permit that must be addressed through the Watershed Restoration Implementation Strategy – elaborating on the restoration goals:

- Runoff Management

- Pollutant Management

- Trash Reduction

- Stream Resources Protection

6.0 Current Conditions in Montgomery County and Framework to Address Next Steps: Ted Brown of Biohabitats then presented the project scope, consultant team, and a technical presentation. The purpose of the presentation was to introduce the current stream resource conditions in four of the County's watersheds, discuss approaches to improve the watersheds, and present different approaches that could be implemented. Following his presentation, stakeholders presented a variety of comments, many in the form of questions. MCDEP and the consultant team offered suggestions on how these comments may be addressed in the implementation plan. The questions and comments are listed below:

- Is there any way to quantify each best management practice (BMP)?
- How long does it take to codify a state-of-the-art BMP to be codified into law?
- Where forests are concerned, are you considering the importance of tree cover?
- If the County counts a Bradford pear to be equivalent to an old oak, it's not.
- Is there a list you can share of the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for western County watersheds?
- How does the TMDL compare with the amount of salt we put on the roads in the past weeks?
- At what point are we "gilding the lily" when we have this fairly serious load on the streams?
- Is there a system of triage to assess the most serious problems?
- There are other things like dripping oils from cars & lawn fertilizers that can poison a stream and others so each has to be looked at.

Carrie Capuco of Capuco Consulting Services, Inc. then continued with a presentation and discussion on the current stewardship outreach programs in the County and their potential ability to contribute significantly to the permit implementation.

Juliana Birkhoff then concluded the large-group portion of the meeting and directed participants to break out groups for discussions of specific watersheds. The participants were divided into two breakout groups, one for the Great Seneca and Lower Monocacy watersheds and one for the Muddy Branch and Watts Branch watersheds. Attendees from areas outside of these watersheds were sent to the Muddy/Watts breakout session.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS BY MAJOR WATERSHED

Muddy Branch and Watts Branch (Note: very few representatives were from either of these watersheds -- 2 from Muddy, 1 from Watts -- most were from other parts of the county making it difficult to solicit extensive feedback specific to the two watersheds).

Existing Conditions: The group reviewed maps and a handout depicting the current conditions in the watershed

Preliminary Watershed Restoration Objectives: The group reviewed the proposed watershed objectives to:

- Improve stream conditions (biological)
- Reduce trash
- Minimize flooding

There was general agreement on these objectives; however, there was the observation that flooding impacts have decreased in recent years with the improvement of conveyance capacity

typically associated with road improvements (i.e., upsizing of road culverts to pass more water). Specific mention was made that Muddy Branch Road had been improved.

Other objectives mentioned included:

- Salt exclusion zones where road salt and de-icing efforts are eliminated or greatly reduced in areas where high quality streams exist. Such practices are implemented in other US regions such as Westchester County, NY to protect drinking water supplies.
- Require all new development to meet full intent of ESD to the MEP
- Implement stream restoration in areas impacted by erosion
- A few minor trash dumping areas were identified on the map; however, the general sentiment was that there isn't a single dumping ground, but rather, dispersed dumping throughout the watershed.

Potential Restoration Opportunities: The group identified the following potential restoration opportunities.

Watts --
Stormwater Retrofits
- North Glen Hills -- Low-Medium density neighborhood with future stream restoration projects identified. Good opportunity to hit residents now with rainscapes program in advance of future stream restoration activities.
- Powerline Right of Ways don't need to be mowed so often which would allow for more valuable habitat and vegetation to be established and less runoff.
- Hospital/institutional area in headwaters; this area is shaded red in IBI map. Opportunity for retrofitting associated with Gaithersburg Master Plan for this area (also covers portion of Muddy)
- Potomac Highlands subdivision

Muddy --
Stream Restoration
- Eroding reaches of Muddy Branch. Upon review of the County map showing reaches assessed as part of the Army Corps of Engineers study, it was noted that the majority of identified eroding reaches were already identified as part of the Corps study.
Stormwater Management
- There is a large remaining farm parcel that has been planned for development and there is community opposition to it. It will be important for a high level of stormwater management control and construction site management to occur if there are not going to be impacts.

Outreach Program Awareness: Nine participants completed the questionnaire that listed 17 programs. Overall, they were aware of all programs and felt most programs should be expanded. Specific comments are listed below.

- Sizing and construction of raingardens appears too complicated. Not clear if Rainscapes program provides technical assistance with design or permitting assistance. Good idea to link up with local watershed groups or community group for assistance
- Where county and non-county programs overlap, such as free trees, its not as clear which program residents should use. Try to consolidate overlaps where feasible. Focus on unique county programs.
- State and County programs are difficult to combine to achieve a desired result.
- Need a mechanism where community groups can pick up and distribute large numbers of program supplies to distribute to interested individuals rather than requiring individuals to pick up themselves. Example: recycle or compost bins to be distributed by master gardeners.

Outreach Support Needed:
- Division of Solid Waste should distribute free composting bins right in the community
- Watershed maps should be distributed to citizen activists and neighborhood groups

Key Stakeholder Groups in the Watershed:
- Homeowner Associations
- Izaak Walton League
- Gaithersburg for master plan
- Hospitals
- Audubon Naturalist Society (this group is more visible in the Lower Potomac Direct but also participated in this stakeholder workshop).

Most Effective Ways to Communicate with the Different Stakeholder Groups:
- Send out information with property tax bills

How to Engage Them:
- It was suggested to do a better job of linking existing County programs to the neighborhood streams making it more local and relevant. For example, "A possible solution to pollution in our [insert neighborhood stream] is the Rainscapes Program."
- It was suggested that the restoration plans have a citizen layer (including citizen groups). There is a range of ways that the DEP and the County can coordinate with citizen groups. For example, a way to get the retrofitting accomplished is to foster a lot of citizen projects.
- Another idea offered was for the County to team up with citizen groups where the groups receive training so that they can then go out into their communities and help people with their projects.
- The point was made that some County programs are too complicated (there are too many options) and too costly. For example, people need more clear guidance about how the Rainscapes program beyond what is available on line. The process needs to be simplified so you don't have to hire an expert to do it.
- There is just as much a need for sticks as incentives to get people to implement practices on their lots.

- It was suggested that information about the programs should go out with each real estate assessment or other County information.
- The Watershed Stewardship Academy in Anne Arundel County was described as a potential program for the County to model after.

Great Seneca and Lower Monocacy (Note**:** No participants in this breakout session lived in the Lower Monocacy watershed, so discussion focused on Great Seneca).

Existing Conditions: The group reviewed maps and a handout depicting the current conditions in the watershed

Preliminary Watershed Restoration Objectives: The participants seemed to agree with the restoration objectives to:

- Reduce total suspended solids (TSS)
- Reduce Nutrients
- Improve Stream Conditions
- Preserve High Quality Streams
- Maintain Recreational Uses

Participants wanted to add objectives to:

- Maintain Wildlife Habitat
- Make the Great Seneca fishable

They also identified the following issues of Concern:

- Stage 4 Master Plan - Clarksburg & 10-Mile creek
- Water temperature and Fish Habitat (Dissolved Oxygen & *e. Coli*)
- Failed septic systems & aging sewer infrastructure
- Pools – chlorinated water dumping
- Over-fertilized Lawns
- Artificial turf on playing fields
  - Drainage/use of BMPs
  - Increasing Temperature of runoff
- Archeological survey necessary prior to stream restoration in many locations
- Much of the trash found along streams in GS appears to be recycling materials that did not make it onto the truck

Potential Restoration Opportunities:

Vegetation Management
- Pursue conservation easement education

- Hedgerow Management along Fields can be improved – many farmers reduce the width of hedgerow and/or allow invasive species to take over.

Stormwater Retrofits
- North Creek - Montgomery Villas. One participant noticed a problem here while stream walking, but a resident claimed that the problem has been fixed with a new retrofit.
- Whetstone Run - problem with siltation in the stream. Look at possible retrofits upstream of Lake Whetstone.
- Drainage Issues at Watkins Mill High School – possible retrofit location.

Stream Restoration
- Clopper Road & CSX (poor stream condition)
- Erosion noticed near Apple Ridge Road – Apple Ridge Road Community drains into small stream that crosses Prothertown Road – possible retrofit location.

Water Quality/Trash
- Damascus Sewer Treatment Plant, at Watkins/ Log House Road.
- Former gun club on Riffle Ford Road in Lower Seneca - suspected past shell dumping in this area. Clean-up opportunity may exist.
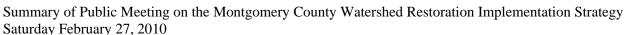
Outreach Program Awareness: Discussion focused on the ways more stakeholders could be engaged. The breakout session participants expressed familiarity and experience with many of the existing county outreach programs. However, one participant noted that "the general public is unaware of what it is unaware of." Consequently a list of stakeholder groups and possible ways to engage them was brainstormed.

Outreach Support Needed: participants agreed that targeted outreach to specific stakeholder groups would be useful. Specific groups to target included:
- Park trail users
- Agricultural professionals
- 18-25 year olds
- High school students
- HOAs; active civic groups
- Master gardeners, landscapers, yard maintenance
- Religious organizations

Key Stakeholder Groups in the Watershed: participants then identified the following list of specific stakeholder groups and organizations that might be a good focus for outreach. They included:
- Isaak Walton League
- Anglers
- Concerned citizens
- Hikers
- Bicyclists

- Paddlers
- Runners
- Naturalists
- Seneca Creek Watershed partners
- Chamber of Commerce
- Building Industry
- Scouts
- Churches
- 4-H
- Menare Foundation
- Lincoln Park Historical Society
- Minority Civic Associations
  - Boyds Boyds Historical Society/Boyds Civic Association
- Maryland-National Capital Building Industry Association
- Montgomery College
- University of Maryland
- PTA
- College Students & Campus Environmental Clubs & Depts.
- High School Environmental Clubs
- Recycling Community

Most Effective Ways to Communicate with the Different Stakeholder Groups: Participants expressed that the best way to communicate with the different stakeholder groups would be to communicate while they are actively engaged in the activity that defines their stakeholder group. For example: signage on hiking trails may be the best way to communicate with trail users

 How to Engage Them: Participants suggested specific activities that might engage stakeholder groups. For example:
- Providing information on stream names and health at bridge signs
- Increasing education on forestry and hedgerow maintenance in agricultural curricula
- Offering unpaid internships for 18 – 25 year olds for credit where students assist with restoration activities
- Including high school students in stream cleanup programs
- Presenting stream statistics to homeowner associations
- Sponsoring a "green competition" among master gardeners, landscapers, and yard maintenance firms.
- Implementing an "adopt a stream" program similar to the current "adopt a road" program.

7.0 Public Comment: The meeting was then turned over to Juliana Birkhoff from Resolve for a concluding discussion with questions and comments from the audience. The discussion lasted approximately 35 minutes, followed by a brief summary and next steps from Meo Curtis. The meeting adjourned at 12:45pm. A list of the general questions and comments is included below:
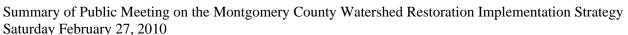
- Aha moments – Anne Kitchell had a strategy for setting restoration priorities. You try to go to an area that is degraded, next to an area of higher quality, and you try to bring the conditions higher, expanding the area of healthier land or water. This is better than going into the middle of a dense poor place and trying to bring that up.
- The general public is unaware of how unaware it is.
- How much there is in terms of history and native americans and historical artifacts in the County and how important it will be to account for and include these in the strategy moving forward. Social and historical things.
- The planned developments that are already permitted; try to get them to meet the requirements of the stormwater permit.
- Are there some strategies that you learned and want to express to the County as being particularly valuable? Please do more of these types of workshops and meetings that involve the public and develop more ways to improve turn out.
- A new Adopt a Stream idea – also trying to find sponsors for funding and other pilot partners.
- Modeling some programs from other counties such as the Watershed Stewards Academy in Anne Arundel County. After graduation as a watershed steward, participants may reach into the community with their deep and extensive knowledge.
- Share our process information with others, educational recording of mistakes to avoid them in the future. This is an adaptive approach. We will try something and if that doesn't work we will move onto something else. So we can say that didn't work for us, and WHY.
- Look at the standards and criteria used to measure quality and success and make sure they are usable and representative of quality and success.
- Upgrade the techniques and make sure they are being done.
- Cluster of future Stream restoration projects already in the budget; Now is the time to target adjacent neighborhood areas with rainscapes (for example) prior to stream restoration.
- Would it be possible for a watershed group to do a presentation at next Saturday's meeting?
- Meeting suggestions – make it shorter to attract those who are mildly interested, but not committed to four hours.

<u>Summary of note cards:</u>

- Ideas for outreach/education:
    - Use competition/game theory, i.e., about planting a tree
    - Install signs at creek crossings
    - In schools – educate re: trash & recycling – where it goes
    - Watershed maps in the community – grocery stores, etc.
- Identify Montgomery Village on all the applicable maps
- Provide quantitative effectiveness of BMPs
- Investigate possible stream retrofits on Whetstone Run, upstream of Lake Whetstone
- Damascus Sewer Treatment Plant – flooding on Loghouse Road
    - 10,100 Watkins Road (Nancy Aldous 301-515-4211)
- Montgomery Village Sites:
    - North Creek

- - o Whetstone Run
- Apple Ridge Road Community (drains into small stream that crosses Prothertown Road)
- All have stormdrains that empty directly into the woods
- Drainage of Watkins Mill High School is VERY BAD.

Meeting Participants

Twenty two participants based on sign in sheet.

The final count from the watershed map included:
Watts: 2
Muddy: 3
Lower Monocacy: 2
Seneca: 7
Others
Potomac: 1
Cabin John:1
Rock Creek: 4

Total:20 on the watershed map

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Meeting Agenda:

9:10-9:20	Welcome and Introductions
9:20-9:30	Overview of Montgomery County Stormwater Management and Regulatory Requirements
9:30-9:50	Current Conditions in Montgomery County and Framework to Address Next Steps
9:50-10:20	Public Input
10:20-10:30	Break
10:30-12:00	Breakout Groups
12:00-12:10	Break and Reconvene
12:10-12:45	Summary and Next Steps
12:45	Adjourn